

Message Text

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11

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OC-06 CCO-00 CPR-01 L-03 SY-05 INR-07

CIAE-00 DODE-00 SS-15 /046 W
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P R 090530Z JUL 76

FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4040

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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DEPT ALSO FOR OC/EX

NAIROBI FOR RCO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ACOM, PDIP, ET US

SUBJECT: SECURITY OF DIPLOMATIC POUCHES, ASMARA AIRPORT

REF: A. ASMARA 0492 (NOTAL), B. ADDIS ABABA 7560 (NOTAL)

1. SINCE MID-JUNE, ALL RPT ALL OUTGOING COMMERCIAL CARGO AT ASMARA AIRPORT HAS BEEN SUBJECT TO INSPECTION BY EPMG SECURITY OFFICIALS (SEE REFTELS). THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS. CONGEN HAS NOT BEEN UTILIZING COMMERCIAL MEANS TO FORWARD DIPLOMATIC POUCHES AND OTHER OFFICIAL CARGO BECAUSE SECURITY OFFICIALS AT ASMARA AIRPORT WILL NOT ACKNOWLEDGE THE DIPLOMATIC STATUS OF THIS CARGO.

2. SINCE THE IMPOSITION OF THESE MEASURES, CONGEN HAS BEEN UTILIZING MAAG FLIGHTS FROM ASMARA AS THE SOLE MEANS OF TRANSPORT FOR ALL CARGO, INCLUDING POUCHES, FPO MAIL, OFFICIAL CARGO AND PERSONAL EFFECTS. TO DATE, SECURITY PRECAUTIONS PARA. ONE HAVE NOT AFFECTED CARGO LOADED ONTO MAAG AIRCRAFT. USE OF MAAG AIRCRAFT FOR ALL CONGEN/NAVCOMMUNIT ASMARA CARGO, HOWEVER, HAS HEAVILY TAXED OUR ABILITY TO MOVE MORE THAN A SMALL AMOUNT OF CARGO ON WEEKLY FLIGHTS, THEREBY CREATING AN INCREASING BACKLOG.

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3. CONGEN C&R OFFICER WAS ADVISED BY ASMARA AIRPORT ADMINISTRATOR, ATO MESFIN, THAT ORDER TO INSPECT ALL CARGO WAS HANDED DOWN FROM EPMG SECURITY OFFICIALS IN ADDIS ABABA. HE UNDERSTOOD AMBASSADOR HUMMEL HAD TAKEN UP SUBJECT AT MOFA ADDIS DURING HIS DEPARTURE CALL BUT THAT NOTHING CAN BE DONE "IN ASMARA" TO ALLEVIATE SITUATION. HE SAID CONGEN'S BEST COURSE WOULD BE TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS WITH MOFA AND SECURITY OFFICIALS IN ADDIS ABABA ON AN EMBASSY LEVEL. IN REFERRING TO THE STRINGENCY OF THE MEASURES HE NOTED THAT EVEN CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR, BG GETACHEW, WAS SUBJECT TO INSPECTION.

4. FOR ADDIS ABABA: ANY INFORMATION AS TO WHAT OFFICIAL ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN TO ASSURE THE INTEGRITY OF DIPLOMATIC CARGO AND POUCHES, IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE SITUATION, WOULD BE APPRECIATED. BOTH FRENCH AND SUDANESE CONSULATE OFFICIALS IN ASMARA HAVE EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO GO ALONG WITH A USG DEMARCHE TO THE EPMG ON THIS SUBJECT.
WAUCHOPE

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